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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/797,096	03/11/2004	Paul Elia	6786-10 SJP	4595

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Stephen J. Perry
Sim & McBurney
6th Floor
330 University Avenue
Toronto, M5G 1R7
CANADA

EXAMINER

LE, MARK T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3617

DATE MAILED: 01/27/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/797,096

Applicant(s)

ELIA, PAUL

Examiner

Mark T. Le

Art Unit

3617

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-2, 4, 8-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3 and 5-7 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. In claim 4, line 6, the expression "said specific type" lacks antecedent basis.

Further, the word "type" in said expression is to be avoided because it is not clear as to what structures are covered by the instant claimed type.

In claim 10, line 2, "each ... are ..." should be corrected to read -- each ... is ...--.

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Smith (US 2,665,848).

Smith discloses a toy train track system having all the features as recited in the instant claims, including a pair of rails 13 supported on railroad bed 20 and ties 14.

Note that railroad bed 20 and ties 14, assembled as shown in Figure 1 of Smith, form a substantially flat surface between rails 13 that is readable as at least one travel surface that is capable of supporting a toy roadway vehicle that is guidable by said rails 13.

Regarding the instant claimed two travel surfaces, as recited in instant claim 14, note that said travel surface of Smith, as described above, inherently includes two travel surfaces, i.e. the left and right portions forming left and right travel surfaces.

4. Claims 1-2 and 8-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Baynes (US 3,734,404).

Baynes discloses a toy roadway vehicle track having all the features recited in the instant claims, including travel surface 14, guiding features 18, 20, and a bottom surface forming a support surface that is capable of being placed on top and in contact with a toy train track such that the roadway vehicle track of Baynes is capable of being used as an adapter system as claimed.

Regarding the instant claimed adapters being dimensioned to fit between the set of rail of a toy train track, as recited in instant claim 2, it is considered that the track (adapter) of Baynes would inherently fit between the set of rails of a toy train track of a larger gauge than the width of the track of Baynes.

Regarding the instant claimed recess for receiving connecting elements of rails and ties, as recited in instant claim 8, consider the lateral spaces outside of ribs 22 and 24 of Baynes, which spaces are readable as recesses that are capable of receiving connecting elements as claimed.

Regarding the instant claimed gap recited in claim 12, note that spaces on the bottom face of the track of Baynes are readable as providing at least one gap that is usable for the instant claimed purpose.

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Northrop (US 2,687,304) in view of Baynes (US 3,734,404).

Northrop, Figures 1, 5 and 6, shows a toy roadway vehicle track similar to that recited in the instant claims, including a travel surface on top of base 1, guiding feature 34 or 40, and the bottom surface of base 1 forming a support surface that is capable of being supported on and in contact with a toy train track, that has a track gauge corresponding to base 1 of Northrop, such that the roadway vehicle track of Northrop is capable of being used as an adapter system as claimed in claims 1-2 and 4.

Regarding the instant claimed plurality of adapters (track sections) connected to form a continuous track length, as recited in instant claim 1, note the track of Baynes, which are formed by a plurality of track sections that are designed to be connected together to form a continuous track length. In view of Baynes, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to form the track of Northrop in multiple connectable sections, in a manner similar to that taught by Baynes, so as to achieve expected advantages thereof, such as greater flexibilities in configuring different track layouts.

7. Claims 3 and 5-7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark T. Le whose telephone number is 703-308-3663. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:00-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Samuel Morano can be reached on 703-308-0230. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Mark T. Le
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3617

mle
1/21/04